

WASHINGTON (October 5) – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) today spoke in favor of legislation that would prevent costly and unnecessary new regulations from being rashly imposed on a key sector of the U.S. manufacturing industry.

In remarks on the House floor, Bachus voiced his support for the Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act of 2011, which requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to take more time to ensure that new regulations governing emissions from cement plants are achievable and to review both the benefits and costs.

“Cement plants are important employers home in Alabama and across the country. Rather than improving the environment, the cost of these regulations, which are many times more strict than those in Europe, could have the opposite effect by causing our plants to close and pushing cement production to Mexico where the environmental standards are much lower. What we need from the EPA is a common sense approach recognizing that environmental protection and economic growth should be compatible,” said Congressman Bachus.

The EPA has estimated its proposed rules would cost at least \$2.2 billion and private studies have warned they could potentially shut down 20% of America’s cement industry. They have been identified as one the “Top Ten Job-Destroying Regulations” being issued by federal agencies.

Congressman Bachus has met with managers and employees at National Cement in Ragland in St. Clair County and Lehigh Hanson in Leeds in Jefferson County who said the EPA regulations would add major new costs to their operations at a time when the industry is struggling to make a profit. Both plants have made significant investments in environmental upgrades in recent years.

The House passed the bill on October 6 by a vote of 262-161.□ Congressman Bachus voted yes.

To view Congressman Bachus’ floor remarks, [click here](#).

To view chart used in floor remarks, [click here](#).

Congressman Bachus' prepared floor statement follows.

Let me thank Congressman John Sullivan and Congressman Ed Whitfield for their leadership and the opportunity to speak. America has always been as solid as cement.

Cement is the foundation for the roads we drive over, the bridges we cross, the offices we work at, and the houses we live in.

Cement plants employ more than 16,000 Americans and are good community citizens that operate according to high environmental standards. Why would we want to drive this industry out of our country or out of business entirely? Yet that is what EPA regulations seem determined to do.

EPA's proposed cement plant regulations are many times more strict and expensive than Europe's, which are considered the world's gold standard. Using the EPA's own numbers, they could shut down 20% of all the cement plants in America.

Let me tell you how this affects real communities. In Alabama, National Cement in St. Clair County and Lehigh Hanson in Leeds are two of the biggest employers in their communities. Those jobs cannot be replaced.

National Cement has suspended a \$350 million expansion project because uncertainty caused by EPA regulations. That project would have created more than a thousand construction jobs and many new permanent jobs. Lehigh Hanson is being told to spend tens of millions of dollars on new regulations even though it has not made a profit for almost two years running.

If you keep pouring on these regulations, plants will close and the jobs will go to countries like Mexico with much lower standards. There will be a net loss not just to our economy and to the environment and that is absurd.

This is the same regulatory overreach we are seeing with health care and government management of the economy. It is destroying jobs and preventing companies from making investments to improve their efficiency and minimize their environmental impact. It is time to put an end to the false choice that has been created environmental protection and economic growth. If we have regulations that make common sense – we can have both.